Date: Sun, 14 Nov 93 04:30:08 PST
From: Ham-Policy Mailing List and Newsgroup <ham-policy@ucsd.edu>
Errors-To: Ham-Policy-Errors@UCSD.Edu
Reply-To: Ham-Policy@UCSD.Edu
Precedence: Bulk
Subject: Ham-Policy Digest V93 #450
To: Ham-Policy

Ham-Policy Digest Sun, 14 Nov 93 Volume 93 : Issue 450

Today's Topics:

Send Replies or notes for publication to: <Ham-Policy@UCSD.Edu>
Send subscription requests to: <Ham-Policy-REQUEST@UCSD.Edu>
Problems you can't solve otherwise to brian@ucsd.edu.

Archives of past issues of the Ham-Policy Digest are available
(by FTP only) from UCSD.Edu in directory "mailarchives/ham-policy".

Date: 10 Nov 93 23:58:29 GMT
From: gatech!concert!duke!wolves!psybbs!fredmail@uunet.uu.net
Subject: Homonauseated (was: GAY & QST)
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

on <Nov 02 12:59>, Rev. Michael P. Deignan to All said:

> RMPD> The fact of the matter is that AIDS is a behaviourally-spread
> RMPD> disease. If you do not engage in any of the high-risk
> RMPD> activities, you reduce your chances of getting the disease
> RMPD> to almost zero.

I'm sure that's a huge comfort to all the hemophiliacs (75% of all
those under 30), health-care professionals, partners of people at
risk (for any reason), and people who've had blood transfusions,
who are HIV+. They can rest assured that it was their own behavior
that earned them a death sentence.

> RMPD> The primary reason for disease propagation in Africa was that

RMPD> hetrosexual couples routinely engage in anal sex as a

You mean, like your buddies in reverendship, Jimmy Swaggart and
Jim Bakker?

Your kind make me sick, Mikey. Go handle your snakes, shaman, and
keep on spewing sanctimonious garbage like the above. And know,
as you do, that I have the deepest possible loathing for your kind.

    73 (Whoops!) ... I mean, "fuck you."

Date: Wed, 10 Nov 1993 22:12:31 GMT
From: well!moon!pixar!pixar.com!bruce@uunet.uu.net
Subject: packet-radio operators should be tested on EBCDIC.
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

With all of the discussion on no-code and licensing structure, I'd like to
suggest that we start requiring that packet radio operators learn EBCDIC.
If you haven't heard, EBCDIC is a computer code that preceded ASCII, and
was widely used by IBM and other business computer systems.

EBCDIC can be sent and recieved as CW using a hand-key just like Morse, but it
is more reliable than Morse code given the same equipment and will get through
in worse conditions. This is because EBCDIC is a _clocked_ code. An operator
recieving EBCDIC by ear can easily recover the clock once they have picked up
the rythym of the transmission, and can determine the presence or absence of
carrier in any particular clock period with more reliability than the same
operator could disambiguate a dot from a dash in poor conditions. When
conditions become worse, the simple expedient of lowering the clock rate
can often be used to punch signals through the worst conditions. Most operators
can easily be trained to handle EBCDIC at a one Hertz clock rate, a speed
that is appropriate for most emergency communications.

Morse code uses one clock for a dot, one clock for an inter-element space,
three clocks for a dash, and three clocks for a character space.
Thus, a character like "C" takes 15 clocks to send in Morse code, but only
8 clocks in EBCDIC _including_ a parity bit that increases the reliability
of communications, or only _four_ clocks in the 4-bit "cut" EBCDIC, which
is similar to "cut" numbers in the Morse code. Thus, EBCDIC is more efficient
than Morse in terms of bandwidth, and can transmit more information given the
same number of clock periods. By converting present Morse code operations to
EBCDIC, we could _double_ the amount of QSOs that would fit in a frequency
allocation.

There are other aspects of EBCDIC that make it desirable for Amateur Radio
operations. Like Morse Code, it is widely considered obsolete, and thus

appeals to many Radio Amateurs. Like Morse Code, EBCDIC has been abandoned by government and commercial users, and thus the responsibility for preserving this valuable mode and passing knowledge of it to the next generation falls squarely on the shoulders of Radio Amateurs. Since Amateur EBCDIC operations use CW, it's as easy to construct and operate EBCDIC equipment as it is to build equipment for Morse Code, and yet the sophisticated operators can use automatic EBCDIC keyers available on the surplus market and advanced automated decoding and clock-recovery schemes for super-speed operation. Sophisticated ASCII-to-EBCDIC conversion software such as the Unix command "dd conv=ebcdic" is available as an aid in education and for moving traffic between modes. As Morse code is a predecessor to the voice operations we use today, EBCDIC is a predecessor to the ASCII operations used in packet radio, and thus should be known to all packet operators before they go on to the more complicated automatic ASCII operations.

I'm sure you'll agree that it's time for us to petition for rule-making to establish knowledge of EBCDIC as a requirement for all packet radio operators.

367 363 153 045 302 231 244 203 205 100 327 205 231 205 225 242
100 322 325 366 343 310 045

-
Bruce Perens KN6TH/AE Bruce@Pixar.com 510-215-3502

Date: 13 Nov 93 22:03:34 GMT
From: ogicse!uwm.edu!cs.utexas.edu!geraldo.cc.utexas.edu!emx.cc.utexas.edu!not-for-mail@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: spread spectrum
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

gary@ke4zv.atl.ga.us (Gary Coffman) says:

>>SS holds great potential for several reasons. SS is highly resistant
>>to multipath. SS offers faster information transfer than most narrow
>>modes. SS is well suited to ALE techniques. SS allows graceful degradation
>>of communications in the face of increasing spectrum loading. The latter is
>>one of the more attractive virtues of SS. No one's communication gets
>>clobbered, rather everyone's communications sees a gradual S/N degradation
>>as band loading increases.

Well, that sounds good to me. I'm ready to throw away my silly old morse key and work those guys in Mongolia who run 50 watts to a dipole, using this SS thang. They're all using it over there, right?

Derek Wills (AA5BT, G3NMX)

Department of Astronomy, University of Texas,
Austin TX 78712. (512-471-1392)
oo7@astro.as.utexas.edu

Date: 13 Nov 93 22:23:41 GMT
From: ogicse!emory!swrinde!cs.utexas.edu!geraldo.cc.utexas.edu!emx.cc.utexas.edu!
not-for-mail@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: The amateur radio service
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

gary@ke4zv.atl.ga.us (Gary Coffman) says:

>>Deliberate strawmen. Amateur radio is defined as a *service*, and
>>it's [sic] continued existance [sic] is justified by it's [sic]
>>*utility* to the nation as defined in 97.1. That it does this by
>>harnessing the enthusiasm and energy of non-professionals doing it
>>as an avocation is irrelevant to the fact that it's [sic] legal basis
>>is that of a service.

  Is this the only country in the world where this is the only justification for amateur radio? It was never justified as such when I got my G license (licence, actually), and I really doubt that hams in Burundi or Malawi get licenses on the grounds of their service to their nation. If service to the nation is the sole justification here, why aren't the written tests full of questions about this aspect of the hobby (service, whatever)? What service are we supposed to be providing on 20m, and is it just a coincidence that our bands coincide so neatly with the amateur bands in nearly all the other 300+ DXCC "countries"? This whole thing conjures up the notion of 600,000+ service-oriented Americans rushing around with HTs on their belts at all hours of the day and night in case they are pressed into "service".

  Am I the only person who is confused about this? What service are we providing? I'd really like to know, because I don't think I'm doing any of it, and I'd hate to lose my license (or my licence) because of this.

Derek "are you being served?" Wills (AA5BT, G3NMX)
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oo7@astro.as.utexas.edu

Date: 12 Nov 93 21:39:19 GMT
From: unix.sri.com!headwall.Stanford.EDU!Csli!paulf@hplabs.hp.com
To: ham-policy@ucsd.edu

References <CGCJ14.18q@walter.bellcore.com>,
<1993Nov12.013952.14013@Csli.Stanford.EDU>, <CGD3Ex.G1J@walter.bellcore.com>
Subject : Re: This is a hobby not a career (was: 3rd

whs70@dancer.cc.bellcore.com (sohl,william h) writes:

>Paul, I've seen enough CW tests to safely say that most people
>DON't pass with anything less than 60% copy. More importantly,
>except for the aberration where someone quesses and passes, I still
>say almost no one can confidently pass the CW test with your
>low end (10%) copy rate.

Hmm, well, that hasn't been my experience; most people pass the 13 wpm with considerably less than 60% copy. Ditto with the 20 wpm exam. Which is why most of the VEs out here encourage people to take all of the CW exams and not just the one you've prepared for; a significant number "get lucky".

>BUT...as to other modes which are asked about as written questions,
>one can miss (answer wrong) EVERY question on any other individual
>mode and STILL pass the written test, while anyone who does
>not get at least 7 correct CW questions right will not pass.

However, to compensate for this, the CW exam can be passed in at least two ways, and can be (and often is) passed with less than 70% correct.

>CW as has been stated over and over again is the ONLY mode
>which has such an absolute pass/fail impact on the test taker.

CW is also the ONLY mode which requires a significant skill acquisition. It's safe to say that most untrained people are capable of speaking into a mic, and most people learn to type in High School. Leaving CW as the only skill which the average amateur is likely to use but not obtained apriori.

The other route available here would be to test for other things separately as well, which in principle I don't object to, since there are a number of things besides CW which should be tested in that manner.

>As to how easy the written test is...I think thats an oversimplification.
>Sure it might seem very easy for anyone with electronics training
>or a good science background, but for most folks that come to ham radio
>without such a background it is no small effort. As for those that claim
>some folks just memorize the entire question pool...that's got to be
>a significant accomplishment in its own. Indeed if the tests were
>so simple then all those generl license holders would be advanced.

>The numbers sure don't reflect that.

Since I teach license courses to nontechnical people, I'd like to put this one to rest. My recipe for getting public safety types through the codeless tech exam is to spend one weekend reading through the entire question pool. At the end, we give the exam. The pass rate for this method and sample population is currently 96%.

Now, a significant number of folks (perhaps not you, Bill) have advocated eliminating the CW exam, and making the written more difficult -- which, of course, would negatively impact the nontechnical folks and positively impact the techies. The system we have now has a good balance between technical and nontechnical audiences.

>I think much of the emotional response to any change in the code
>requirements is more cncerned with lowering/eliminating the 13wpm
>requirement because then there'd be a lot of technicians that
>would definetly make the move to general...even with a 5wpm
>international treaty requiremnt on CW.

I tend not to deal emotional responses, except those directed at me. But from what I've seen here and elsewhere, both sides of this issue have tended to deal too heavily in emotional rhetoric, with the "pro-CW" side responding as you say, and the "anti-cw" side victimizing itself.

Instead, I prefer to look at this question as a professional test designer, asking "what knowledge should we test for, and why?" At the very least, I'd like to see this discussion address that question a little more, and see a little bit less of the "Us vs Them" rhetoric.

--
-=Paul Flaherty, N9FZX | "Fighter pilots make movies. Bomber pilots make
->paulf@Stanford.EDU | history." -- Jake Grafton

End of Ham-Policy Digest V93 #450
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